

Remarks

This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed June 17, 2004. Claims 1 and 2 are being amended, and claims 9-17 are being added. In view of the amendment to claims 1 and 2, and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1-17 are allowable. Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and following remarks, allowance of claims 1-17 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Office Action asserts that the phrases “clamping members are inclined opposite to tension direction” and “slotted similar to a comb” are not clear. Claim 1 is being amended to more clearly define the invention and eliminate the phrases indicated as unclear in the Office Action. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1. In view of the above amendment to claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

In the Office Action, claims 1-3 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bianca (U.S. Pat. No. 4,822,286). Bianca discloses a device for relieving mechanical tension comprising two half shells 42. Each shell 42 is in the shape of a longitudinally bisected and truncated cone extending from a base to a free end 48. Rows of teeth 50 formed on each shell 42 are spaced in the tension direction of the cable between the base and free end of each shell 42. Each tooth extends in a different plane transverse to the tension direction of the cable. In addition, the free ends of the teeth define a flat profile.

The embodiment of the invention claimed in claim 1, as amended, in the present application includes the limitation of a plurality of comb teeth having free ends defining a concave profile. Teeth having free ends that define a concave profile is disclosed in Paragraphs [00146]-[00149] and Figs. 39-43 and 46-48 of the present application, and is thus not new matter. Each single tooth in Bianca is concave that partially wraps around a cable. However, the profile of the teeth defined by the free ends of the plurality of teeth in Bianca

shown in Figs. 2-4 of Bianca is clearly flat. Accordingly, Bianca does not disclose, or suggest, the limitation of a plurality of comb teeth having free ends defining a concave profile, as claimed in amended claim 1 of the present application. As a result, claim 1 is clearly distinguished from Bianca. Claims 2, 3, and 6-8 depend from claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bianca is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Douty et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,108,527). Douty et al. discloses a device for relieving mechanical tension of an electrical cable. The device includes rigid clamping members 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28 that clamp onto an electrical cable. Each clamping member in Douty et al. includes a row of teeth comprising at least two teeth. As in Bianca, each tooth extends in a different plane transverse to the tension direction of the cable and the free ends of the teeth define a flat profile.

As discussed above, the embodiment of the invention claimed in claim 1, as amended, includes the limitation of a plurality of comb teeth having free ends defining a concave profile. As in Bianca, the profile of the teeth in Douty et al. defined by the free ends of the plurality of teeth is clearly flat. Accordingly, Douty et al. does not disclose, or suggest, the limitation of a plurality of comb teeth having free ends defining a concave profile, as claimed in amended claim 1 of the present application. Moreover, there is no suggestion in Douty et al. that any of the clamping members having teeth are elastically flexible, as required in claim 1. As a result, Douty et al. is clearly distinguished from claim 1. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Douty et al. is respectfully requested.

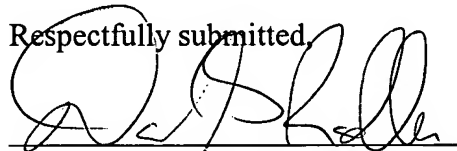
Claims 9-17 are being added, and are directed at a device for relieving mechanical tension of an electric cable. Independent claim 9 includes the limitation of two symmetrical, elastically flexible clamping members, wherein each of the clamping members comprises a plurality of comb teeth, said comb teeth being separated from one another by a respective

slot, said comb teeth and said slots extending parallel to one another in one plane transverse to the tension direction of the cable. Clamping members comprising teeth separated from one another by a respective slot and extending parallel to one another in one plane transverse to the tension direction of the cable is disclosed in Paragraphs [00146]-[00149] and Figs. 39-43 and 46-48 of Applicant's original disclosure. Accordingly, no new matter is being added.

As discussed above, neither Bianca or Douty disclose, or suggest, two symmetrical, elastically flexible clamping members, wherein each of the clamping members comprises a plurality of comb teeth, said comb teeth being separated from one another by a respective slot, said comb teeth and said slots extending parallel to one another in one plane transverse to the tension direction of the cable. Moreover, none of the other cited references disclose, or suggest, a device for relieving mechanical tension of an electric cable having such a structure. Claims 10-17 depend from claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 9-17 are patentable over the cited references. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests consideration and allowance of claims 9-17.

Claims 1 and 2 are being amended, and claims 9-17 are being added. In view of the amendments to claims 1 and 2, and the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8, and consideration and allowance of claims 9-17. No additional fees for filing this response are believed to be due. However, if such fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge them to deposit account no. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,



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